

PROGRAMME

**Master of Ceremonies
Alan Shain**

Rhythms of the Sudan
performed by
Eid Ishmael & his band

Ghost Duet
performed by
Spirit Synott & Debbie Wilson

Alone and unable to sleep, a woman is haunted by her sister's death.

Crazy for Life
featuring
Victoria Maxwell

PROGRAMME NOTES

Eid Ishmael

Eid Ishmael has been performing music in his native Sudan for many years. He plans to study music at the University of Toronto next year. Eid was a finalist when he performed solo in the *Balance Idol Affair* earlier this year. His exceptional musicality and dynamic performance style will quickly earn him a place in Toronto's international music scene.

Tonight he is accompanied by Yassif on Keyboard, Mohammed on Saxophone, Wolaid on Bass guitar, Barik on Drum and Bashir on Flute.

Rachel Gorman (Choreographer)

Rachel Gorman bases her work in the physical communication between real people, in its richness and quirkiness. *Globe and Mail's* Paula Citron called Gorman's *Waking the Living*, presented in the Composer's Choice series of the fringe Festival of Independent Dance Artists 2002, "compelling...a disturbing and riveting reality check".

Ghost Duet is part of a longer work-in-progress on political prisoners. It was inspired by stories of a Kurdish family whose sister was killed in one of the prisons of Iran's Islamic Republic. An earlier version of this duet was performed at the Arts Ability festival in Winnipeg in March 2004.

Victoria Maxwell

Creative Director of *Crazy for Life Co.* and an award-winning actress and playwright with over 15 years experience, Victoria Maxwell has worked alongside David Duchovny, John Travolta and Johnny Depp, among others.

Crazy For Life, a true-life story about accepting and living with a psychiatric disorder, tours internationally to sold-out audiences and rave

reviews. Recently finishing a run in Toronto and England, Victoria will 'hit the boards' in the United States in 2005. Her efforts recently captured the Gordon Armstrong Theatre Award, finalist honours in the Canadian National Playwriting Competition and the Courage to Come Back Award. She is also featured in the Knowledge Network documentary 'Living with Depression' aired in May. *Crazy for Life* is currently being translated into Japanese and Spanish and tours internationally.

Alan Shain

Knowing well the transformative power of comedy, Alan Shain's heart is profoundly committed to performing. He is a favorite at conferences, schools, and universities, and holds the honor of being the only Canadian artist invited to the 2000 Paralympic Arts Festival in Sydney, Australia.. Alan's artistic work is founded on a deep commitment to disability activism and taking a personal responsibility for creating change.

Spirit Synott

Dancer and "roll" model Spirit Synott has been performing across Canada since 1999. She has been a guest performer with acclaimed Toronto-based companies Canboulay Dance Theatre and OMO Dance Company, and has performed with independent artists Anthony Guerra, Viv Moore and Almond Small. Spirit is also in high demand as a solo artist and personality at corporate events and disability arts festivals, and has performed at an impressive range of venues including Roy Thompson Hall; Nathan Philips Square; the Betty Oliphant Theatre; Buddies in Bad Times Theatre; Artword Theatre; EPCOR Centre for Performing Arts, Calgary; the Round House in Vancouver; and the Millennium Centre in Winnipeg. Spirit has studied dance with Debbie Wilson (modern and ballet); Rachel Gorman (repertoire and modern); Ronald Taylor and Anthony Guerra (African/Caribbean folk); and Almond Small (modern)..

Debbie Wilson

Debbie Wilson is the founder of the OMO Dance Company for which she has created a solid repertoire of critically acclaimed works, including a 2002 *Dora Mavor Moore Award* nomination for Outstanding New Choreography. As a performer, she has danced with the Cincinnati Ballet Company, the American Dance Machine, Contemporary Dance Theater (USA), Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, Howard Richard & Dancers, Judith Marcuse Dance Company, Randy Glynn Dance Project and Ballet Jorgen as well as participating in many independent dance projects. She has also worked as rehearsal mistress and has toured internationally with Cincinnati Ballet, American Dance Machine and Les Ballets Jazz. She began her choreographic career in 1992 and established OMO in 1994. Her choreography has been performed by Ballet Jorgen, Quinte Ballet, Ryerson Dances and the Macedonian National Theatre.

Lilia Silveira

Lilia Silveira's eclectic, melodic, and compelling soundtrack recordings lend themselves perfectly to dance and dance-theatre. Lilia has composed scores for several dance projects, including OMO Dance Company's *Diary of an Exile* and Rachel Gorman's *Waking the Living*, in the Composer's Choice series of fFIDA 2002. As a singer/songwriter, Lilia performs regularly in Toronto, and has also played in Vancouver, Michigan, and Pico, Azores. Lilia released her debut CD *Perhaps* in 1998, her second CD, *Radio Friendly* in May 2002, and is currently recording her first CD with her band The Cliks.

Michelle Turpin

Michelle Turpin's costume designs have a broad range, encompassing bridal and evening wear as well as theatrical and dance costumes. In October 2000 she received the Schwarzkopf Spirit of Design Award for six eveningwear ensembles entered in the Paradigm Events' Art of Fashion show.